



July 17, 2020

Mr. Robert L. "Bob" Caslen, Jr.
President
University of South Carolina - Columbia
Osborne Admin. Building, Suite 206
Columbia, SC 29208

Dear Mr. Caslen:

Thank you for submitting the following substantive change:

Substantive change:

**Significant Departure Program
Certificate in Health Care Compliance
Master of Science in Law (M.S.L.) in Health Systems Law**

Submission date:

11/12/2019

Implementation date:

8/3/2020

Case ID:

SC008256

Additional information was requested from the institution January 21, 2020. The information was received June 17, 2020 and has been integrated into this response.

The University of South Carolina – Columbia is proposing a new 30 credit hour Master of Studies in Law (M.S.L.) degree program in Health Systems Law, and a related 15 credit hour Certificate program in Health Care Compliance. The programs, which are consistent with the institution's mission, are designed to provide graduates with knowledge to enhance their careers and employment prospects in a range of health law-related positions. The primary target audience is working professionals and other individuals who desire a career in the health care industry. The M.S.L. program will be offered in hybrid format with an expected initial enrollment of 38 students; the Certificate will be completely online with an initial enrollment of 63 students. Administrative oversight will be provided by the Graduate Program Director. The Certificate program was approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education in September 2019; the M.S.L. program was approved in June 2020.

A list of all programs offered by the University was provided, as well as a list of approved off-campus instructional sites. The curriculum, course descriptions, and student learning outcomes were also included. Admission and graduation requirements, along with a definition of credit hours, were noted. Student learning will be assessed through a variety of means including examinations, portfolios, supervised practice placements, a major written paper, an applied research project, and/or development of case studies. The programs will also be integrated into the University-wide institutional effectiveness process which was described. This process



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involves the systematic collection, review, and use of assessment data for continual improvement of teaching and learning. The Law School will use assessment results to modify the curriculum, student advisement, and career placement services as needed to achieve the program objectives.

The Faculty Roster describes the qualifications of the two full-time faculty members who will support the M.S.L. and Certificate programs. The faculty members each have a Juris Doctor degree, plus professional experience, and appear qualified to teach the assigned courses. Qualifications for future faculty members to be hired were also provided. Keep in mind that the ultimate determination of faculty qualifications is the responsibility of the peer review teams who will assess the faculty as part of the institution's next SACSCOC accreditation review.

Library and learning resources appear to be adequate. The University of South Carolina Law Library has an extensive collection of both print and electronic resources that support the legal curriculum such as books/e-books, journals, streaming videos, and databases. Students may access all items either in person, or electronically through the Library website. Additional external resources are available through the PASCAL (Partnership Among *South Carolina* Academic Libraries) consortium, interlibrary loans, and a book delivery service. Students enrolled in the Law School also have full use of the University's Thomas Cooper Library and the Medical School Library. Librarians provide reference and research assistance through classroom instruction and individual consultations. Students may also access library research guides and video tutorials that are embedded in the Blackboard learning management system.

Student support services appear to be adequate and are available to all students either in person or remotely. Along with standard academic support services such as financial aid, student records, and admissions, the University provides academic advising, career services, and disability assistance. The Director of Academic Success will be available to help with legal writing, analysis, and research. Additional resources include peer tutoring, study skills workshops, and early intervention referrals. Counseling and Psychiatric Services provides psychological counseling, as well as clinical supervision for select mental health graduates. Students may also participate in intramural sports, clubs, and community service programs.

The physical resources appear to be adequate. The Law School building is a state-of-the-art facility that opened in June 2017. This facility houses faculty and administrative offices, plus 18 classrooms ranging in seating capacity from 20 to 300. All classrooms are equipped with instructional technology such as a digital projector, sound system, smart podium, Extron annotation system, document camera, Apple TV, Blu Ray/DVD Player, and internet connectivity. The University has the ability to set up Webex videoconferencing in any of the classrooms and has both Adobe Connect and Blackboard to support distance learning courses. The Law School building also has a dedicated Student Commons area with 24 computer workstations and a Student Services Suite located on the first floor.



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Financial support for the two programs appears to be adequate; an estimated multi-year budget was provided. Revenues will come primarily from student tuition. Expenses will include instructional personnel, administrative support, equipment, supplies, and library resources. Revenues are predicted to outpace expenses after the second year of each program's operation. A contingency plan is in place to ensure the financial stability of both programs.

Policy Update

Please note that, at its meeting in June 2018, the SACSCOC Board of Trustees approved modification of the *Substantive Change Policy for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement*, for any type of substantive change requiring approval. If an approved substantive change has not been implemented within two years of action by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, the institution will need to submit a new prospectus for the change or application for a level change.

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Master of Studies in Law (M.S.L.) degree program in Health Systems Law, and the Certificate program in Health Care Compliance. It was the decision of the Board to approve the programs and include them in the scope of the current accreditation.

Enclosed is an invoice for \$500 to help defray the cost of reviewing the prospectus.

Should you need assistance, please contact Dr. Linda Thomas-Glover at 404-679-4501 or via email at lthomas-glover@sacscoc.org.

Please include the Case ID number above in all submissions or correspondence about this substantive change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW/SKO:lp

Enclosure (invoice with liaison's copy only)

cc: Mr. Douglas D. Miles, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation
Dr. Linda Thomas-Glover